Met Office

NEWS

Are you #WeatherReady?

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Two thirds of British people have been caught out by severe weather, according to latest research from the Met Office, despite 9 in 10 believing that preparing for winter weather is important.

The research showed failing to prepare for weather has an impact on people's day-to-day lives. In a survey of 2000 adults, over one third of those questioned said they had experienced disruption to public transport, nearly one fifth confessed to being late for work and more than 1 in 10 said adverse weather had forced them to cancel social plans.

To help the public be better prepared for severe weather all year round, the Met Office is launching 'WeatherReady'. Run in partnership with Cabinet Office, the initiative provides expert advice on travel, protecting your home and your health and wellbeing.

Oliver Dowden MP, Minister for Implementation, Cabinet Office said: "Last year we saw the impact severe weather can have on our services and communities. Our public services and emergency responders continue to prepare for severe weather as they do every year, but everyone can take simple actions to prepare themselves and support their friends and neighbours.

"This might mean having a flu jab, checking your vehicle and property are ready for the changing weather conditions, or offering support to your elderly or vulnerable neighbours. Thinking ahead can make a big difference if the weather takes a turn for the worse."

Looking out for the elderly

Reassuringly, close to half (41%) of those asked said they checked on elderly or vulnerable neighbours and relatives when the weather turned colder. Millennials in particular are setting a good example, with two thirds of those questioned saying they check in on elderly relatives or neighbours to make sure they are safe and prepared.

The research also found that Londoners are the most likely to check on vulnerable neighbours and relatives with 56% saying that would be a priority when severe weather hits, compared to an average of 37% across the eleven other regions surveyed.

What are the consequences of not preparing for severe weather?

The survey highlighted some of the main ways severe weather has had an impact on people's lives. One in five of those questioned have experienced boilers breaking down, damage to property and vehicles not starting, with a quarter experiencing power failure.

Most common ways people are affected by bad weather and how the Met Office can help:

- 31% said that they experienced disruption to public transport

Different types of weather affects different modes of transport and you should consider alternative commuting routes and options for if transport is affected by weather.

- 24% experienced a power cut

The Met Office recommends you have a torch, candles, bottled water and some basic food supplies available. Save the power cut number in your phone – 105 in case of emergencies and consider if you, your relatives, or neighbours should be on the Priority Services Register to receive extra support.

- 21% car wouldn't start

There is nothing more frustrating than your car not starting and there are vehicle checks you can make ahead of winter, including preparing a winter kit for your car to help reduce the risk of being affected by problems caused by weather.

- 20% experienced damage to their property

Now is the perfect time to make some simple checks and maintenance around your home. Thinking about what may be impacted by strong winds or floods will reduce the risk of damage to your property, for example guttering, pipes, roof tiles, ground floor items and garden items.

- 19% had their boiler break

It's worth getting your boiler serviced yearly, and ensuring your pipes are insulated. This will also help you save money. You should also check where your stop tap is located so you can cut off the water supply in case of a burst pipe.

Derrick Ryall, Associate Director of Public Weather Services at the Met Office, said: "With winter around the corner, now is the time to think about preparing for the potential impacts of severe weather. The Met Office WeatherReady initiative provides simple advice to prepare for and cope with winter weather, to help keep you, your home, your family and neighbours safe. On our website you'll find advice on vehicle checks for winter, maintenance tips to prepare your home and help avoid costly repairs and information on what to do in a power cut.

"By signing up to our warnings alert service, you can stay up to date with the latest forecast and weather warnings throughout the year, but importantly at times of severe weather."

The Met Office's Weather Ready website has plenty of weather-related advice from expert partners to help people prepare for the potential impacts of severe weather on their home, health and wellbeing and families this winter, including:

For more information and expert advice, please visit www.metoffice.gov.uk/WeatherReady.

You can also help spread the message of weather preparedness by sharing our advice through social media channels, websites, and using the #WeatherReady hashtag.

For resilience practitioners, we have promotional material available to download.

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